

Amendments to the Specification:

Please add the following new paragraph at page 1, after the title of the application:

This application is the U.S. national phase application of PCT International Application No. PCT/GB03/00068, and claims priority of British Patent Application No. 0200758.1.

Please replace the paragraph, beginning at page 1, line 21, with the following rewritten paragraph:

In recent years, oxide dispersion strengthened ("ODS") alloys have become available ~~(examples include PM1000, PM2000, MA758, MA956)~~ with adequate high temperature strengths to act as stirrer cores for use in molten glass. Examples of such ODS alloys include, but are not limited to, PM1000 and PM2000, which are trademarks of PLANSEE AG of Reutte, Austria. The typical chemical composition, by weight %, of PM1000 is 20 Cr, 3 Fe, 0.5 Ti, 0.3 Al, 0.6 Y₂O₃, remainder Ni. The typical chemical composition, by weight %, of PM2000 is 20 Cr, 5.5 Al, 0.5 Ti, 0.5 Y₂O₃, remainder Fe. Further examples of suitable ODS alloys include, but are not limited to, mechanical alloys such as MA758 and MA956. The typical chemical composition, by weight %, of MA758 is 30 Cr, 0.6 Y₂O₃, 0.5 W, 0.37 Total O, 0.3 Al, 0.05 C, remainder Ni. The typical chemical composition, by weight %, of MA956 is 20 Cr, 4.5 Al, 0.5 Ti, 0.50 Y₂O₃, 0.045 N, 0.01 C, remainder Fe. Unlike Mo, these ODS materials do not catastrophically oxidise, but form relatively protective surface oxide layers. However, these ODS materials are not resistant to molten glass and therefore still require protection in the form of Pt cladding. The Pt cladding does not have to be a complete containment because of the greater resistance of the core material to oxidation. Interdiffusion remains a problem if the Pt and ODS materials are in direct contact. Unfortunately, the best types of ceramic interlayers which could be considered as a diffusion barriers, do not have expansion coefficients which match the requirements of the ODS alloys. Accordingly, these diffusion barrier layers can become damaged and spall off in service. In particular, the possibility of using part claddings (an opportunity to reduce cost) requires that the diffusion barrier layer extend right up to (or just beyond) the free edge of the cladding. This is a vulnerable point because if spalling of the interlayer did occur it could cause contamination of the glass.